

Item Title: Appropriate Additional Funding for the Pharmacy Program

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners appropriates \$625,000 in additional budget capacity in the General Fund to support the continuation of the Pharmacy Program.

Item Summary:

Purpose: In accordance with the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, the Wake County Board of Commissioners must approve all amendments that increase the budget for a fund.

Background: The Pharmacy Program provides cost effective access to prescription medication services for the uninsured and underinsured residents of Wake County seen through our Public Health clinics and through behavioral health providers that prescribe medications on the pharmacy's behavioral health formulary.

With standard market fluctuations, the cost of medications continues to increase over time. The addition of Medicaid expansion and tailored plans have resulted in more insured clients who were previously uninsured. As a result, medication purchasing has adjusted with the shift. Additional funding is needed to continue to support the program.

Strategic Plan: This action supports Community Health and Wellbeing Goal 3: By 2029, 5% more residents asked will indicate low barriers to healthcare and behavioral health services, such as access to providers, insurance coverage, affordability and appointment wait times.

Fiscal Impact: Increase the expenditure and revenue budget by \$625,000 to continue funding the Pharmacy Program. Funding will be offset by 100% revenue reimbursement of approximately \$625,000 from commercial insurance plans, out of pocket payments, Medicaid, and Medicare. As of November 12, 2025, the Pharmacy program collections have now exceeded the FY26 revenue budget. No additional County share is required.

Additional Information:

This fiscal year, the Pharmacy program utilized the full original budget within the first 4 months (November 2025). The previously requested budget capacity covered the following 4 months. This request will allow for budget capacity for the remaining 4 months of Fiscal Year 26.

The Pharmacy program has experienced shifts in the population needs post-COVID with Medicaid expansion (began 12/1/2023) and the addition of behavioral health Medicaid tailored plan (began in 7/1/2024). Many clients who were previously uninsured have since become insured. This shift in insured population has affected the medication procurement process as medication must be purchased in advance of billing to insurances for reimbursement.

The pharmacy continues to provide access to cost effective medications and services for the citizens of Wake County. In FY 2025, total medication costs exceeded the adopted budget by \$669,802, at 70% over budget. Increase is directly related to price escalations from vendors and more insured individuals receiving injectable medications in Wake County.

Wake County Public Health receives funding from copayments and insurance reimbursements, of which the pharmacy saw a 68% revenue increase (\$633,301 over FY 2024) from private commercial insurance plans, Medicaid, Medicare, and adults that pay out of pocket.

The table below shows the adopted budget, total expenditures for all medication purchases, and total revenue for FY 2019 through FY 2025 and year to date FY 2026 (July – January).

Medication purchases include medications/devices that are ordered for administration within Clinic visits, as well as pharmacy dispensing. There are reimbursements for these items that are reported to the Clinics and not reflected in the pharmacy revenue (i.e. Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptives – LARCs).

	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026 YTD
Adopted Budget	\$1,285,764	\$1,150,674	\$1,094,773	\$1,094,773	\$961,303	\$961,303	\$961,303	\$961,303
Amended Budget	\$1,285,764	\$1,150,674	\$1,094,773	\$1,094,773	\$961,303	\$961,303	\$961,303	\$1,681,303
Total Expenditure	\$771,238	\$729,449	\$551,841	\$707,082	\$622,441	\$865,236	\$1,631,105	\$1,425,656
Total Revenue	\$476,987	\$512,007	\$409,496	\$434,168	\$445,336	\$932,611	\$1,566,080	\$1,383,315
LAIA Expenditure	\$ 255,227	\$ 207,410	\$ 164,778	\$ 136,177	\$ 167,548	\$ 343,071	\$ 816,864	\$ 874,239

The table below shows the cost to the County for Long-Acting Injectable Antipsychotic (LAIA) medications from FY2019 to FY2025.

Retail count refers to the injections purchased upfront for reimbursement from insurance companies after dispensing. PAP count refers to the number of Patient Assistance Programs that assist application approved uninsured income eligible patients with a year’s supply of injections at no charge. There has been a shift in the Retail: PAP count ratio over time, in correlation with the timing of Medicaid expansion and tailored plan additions.

	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026 YTD
Total LAIA injections	826	840	635	627	641	638	967	641
Retail Count	248	188	111	91	101	218	593	458
PAP Count	578	652	524	536	540	420	374	183
LAIA Expenditures	\$ 255,227	\$ 207,410	\$ 164,778	\$ 136,177	\$ 167,548	\$ 343,071	\$ 816,864	\$ 874,239

Attachments:

1. Budget Memo – FY2026 Human Services